



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

items of the released labor, its earnings for the family, its product for the nation. And all this gain would be greater in proportion to the need of it, the relative saving to our poorest more than that of the rich.

Details of food containers, keeping things hot and cold for hours, should present no difficulties to manufacturers of thermos bottles and fireless cookers. Such, and suitable delivery wagons, are already in use in Europe.

The most important thing is the establishment of authoritative food laboratories to save the mistakes and discouragement of scattered efforts, and the next is for our housekeepers to recognize the imperative duty of the change of method in this industry.

Some difficulty will be experienced, no doubt, from the objections of Mr. Jones, but if the food is really good and he sees himself much richer for the change, he will be convinced in time. More immediately, if the husband and father has gone to the war, the mother at home will be both relieved in labor and enriched in cash. And one generation of children, accustomed to such wiser living, will end opposition forever.

THE RELATION OF THE HOUSEWIFE TO THE FOOD PROBLEM

BY NEVADA DAVIS HITCHCOCK,

Instructor in Marketing, Temple University, Philadelphia.

The consumer has been much in the limelight of publicity within the past few years. The consuming public is represented so far as foods are concerned by the housewife. It is, therefore, upon the latter that the searchlight has been focused. There is no problem in which the public is more interested than that of food and I may add, no problem in which the public is inclined to do less except to give advice. At any rate there has been much talk, reams of writing and millions of words. These have been cast before the housewife in numerous forms, offering her advice, hurling it at her, rather, showering her with remedies, heralding her as the one able to solve the puzzle of how to reduce the cost of living, assailing her as false to her trust, calling her attention to all sorts of panaceas warranted

to cure all the ills of soaring prices. After having given their advice, these advisors have washed their hands of responsibility and have gaily gone their way. They have told the housewife what to do to get cheap food. It becomes her responsibility then.

The housewife, equipped with such weapons as "how to use left-overs" and a market basket, has about as much chance of lowering the high cost of living as a baby armed with a powder puff has of frightening a burglar. The truth of the matter is that the food problem has reached such gigantic proportions that under our present system the consumer has no power whatever against organized business. The produce of our farms passes like a shuttle, weaving in and out of numerous threads before it reaches the hands of the housewife. Business interests in our cities have been organized. We have wholesale and retail associations made up of jobbers, commission men and retail grocers. These in turn are connected with railroad interests, manufacturers and financial interests. The individual producer is at one end of the line, the individual consumer at the other. They both have to dance when the organized interests pull the string. The conflict between the housewife and high prices does not even approach a David and Goliath conflict. One was brain pitted against brawn, but the other is only an individual interest against collective brains and financial brawn. It is at best but a pigmy attempt.

Every bit of the expense connected with foods has to be borne by the consuming public. And, as affairs are conducted at present, the housewife is helpless, no matter how much she may wish to do her part. As an example there is the recent attempt to lower the cost of food by eliminating the delivery system, or by placing it on a charge basis. Although many women signified their willingness to do with fewer deliveries and to pay a five-cent charge provided the price of goods were lowered in consequence, deliveries were cut out entirely or were made at *ten* cents without the housewife perceiving any benefit whatever to herself. She has to bear heavy burdens and use more time without receiving any appreciable benefit. There has been an abuse of the delivery but the housewife has been the victim rather than the offender because free delivery at all hours has been held out to her as a bait for her patronage. It is neither wise nor just to attempt to punish her by taking away delivery service altogether, or by charging her ten cents for it. It requires too much

time and too much strength when the housewife attempts to carry all her food home. It is returning to the dark ages. One might as well go back to candles and to backyard hydrants, because it would reduce light and water costs.

In conserving food after it comes into her hands the housewife can do a great deal. That, however, is but one phase of the problem. There is an old proverb which says "First catch your hare, and then cook it." This is most applicable to the situation. We have urged women to can and to dry food, but no effort has been made except in sporadic cases to get food before them that they can afford to buy and conserve.

The true relation of the housewife to the food problem may best be understood if one considers her actual responsibility and her limitations. This responsibility of the housewife includes three things: wise food selection, proper preparation and adequate conservation.

HER RESPONSIBILITY

To make a wise selection one must have a knowledge of food values, based upon the principles of nutrition. There must be the proper grouping of foods, so that all the necessary elements will be given in the right proportion each day. Then one must have a knowledge of markets, of food prices and of seasonal foods, in order to get the best food for the least money.

The next step is the proper preparation in order that food will not be wasted in sink and garbage pail. The housewife also must know the amount of heat and the length of time required to cook food. Otherwise there is great possible waste in food preparation, for many times nearly a third of the nourishment is lost, in meat, for instance, by overcooking.

The third division is adequate conservation. The housewife must look after the refrigeration, must see that foods are kept at as low degree of temperature as possible. One phase of food preservation is in keeping the foods covered and away from contact with other foods. Then there is the science of using left-overs, *i. e.*, in combining remnants of food so that nothing will be wasted. These are the essentials of the responsibility that each housewife ought to bear toward the food problem. That the vast majority of women do not know how to do all these things perfectly arouses biting sarcasm from many quarters. But if one will stop to consider the limitations

with which the housewife of today has to contend , much that seems reprehensible in her conduct will be considered excusable.

HER LIMITATIONS

Just why the housewife cannot rise to the full responsibility that is laid upon her will be apparent at once if we go back a little while and study what her preparation has been to carry out this responsibility.

In the first place it is only within recent years that any of us have known how great a part the food problem plays in the development of the individual, the home and the nation. A woman who could cook a delicious dish, serve an attractive meal and give to her family full satisfaction in taste and quantity was considered as having done her duty. But with the advance in science and the research work that is carried on, a new phase of the food problem arose. The housewife was called upon to conserve the health of the family as well as the family income. In other words, she must not only learn to be an economical, wise cook, but she also must be an economical, wise buyer of foods. Now although this responsibility has been laid upon her for some years past, very little has been done to help her to carry that responsibility wisely and well.

For a long time farmers have been instructed through agricultural colleges, experiment stations, farm agents and the public press in regard to the necessity of knowing how to feed and care for their livestock. Numerous pamphlets, bulletins, articles and books were written and put upon the market so that any farmer that wished to do so might be able to know how to care for his flocks and herds. On the other hand, very little was done until recent years to give the housewife proper instruction in regard to what she must know about foods from a scientific viewpoint. Of course, we have had in our public schools, for fifteen or twenty years, a system of instruction in domestic science, but much of this instruction has been meager. By this I mean no attack upon the work done in the public school at all. I simply wish to call attention to the fact that domestic science and home economics are of so recent development that the practical application has not been worked out long enough to enable the average housewife to have had that instruction. Cooking, as it is taught in the public schools, is in its mere infancy so far as the average housewife is concerned, and, of course, in private schools

there has been much less progress. In women's clubs and charitable associations some attention has been paid to the subject, but no definite program has been carried out along both practical and theoretical lines.

We hear a good deal about what has been done by women's clubs in regard to the food problem, and much has been done, but it is more along the line of clean foods and pure foods than it has been in regard to food values, food preparation and food conservation. The fundamental principles of economics, upon which the food problem really rests, if we are to have enough food to feed the masses in our great cities, have not been touched upon to any extent either in public or private schools, or in women's clubs or organizations. In fact, political economists, with a few exceptions, have not given this subject the attention it deserves and the attention they must necessarily give to it in the future through circumstances that have arisen since our entrance into the great war.

While the consumer has been called upon and has responded in many cases to do many things, no attempt at protection against the dangerous results of inefficient transportation and distribution and food speculation has been given to the housewife until the food control bill was passed in Congress and Mr. Hoover became Food Administrator of the United States. In fact the great majority of business men and the members of different organizations of the public in general do not yet realize the impossibility of the consumers' doing anything more than merely offering the slight resistance to the flood of the cost of living with the weapon of the market basket and the boycott.

Take the question of the boycott, for instance. It is easy enough to say to women, as was done last winter in New York, "Do not buy eggs. Boycott the egg and bring down the price." And the consumer, willing to do her part, followed this advice. What is the result? The storage houses can hold eggs until they get the price that they wish at very little extra cost. The poultryman, on the other hand, producing eggs in the winter time at a high cost of feed and with much hard work, loses his market for eggs on account of the boycott. As a result he becomes discouraged, reduces his flock, and sells off his breeding stock. The cold storage dealer sells his eggs when the first effects of the boycott have waned at the price he would have received if there had been no

boycott, and loses practically nothing. The consumer has done without eggs and has perhaps lowered the cost of eggs two or three cents a dozen for a short time without stopping to reflect that by cutting out the market for the poultryman she has made it impossible for him to keep on with his usual number of hens, and so for that reason the next year there will be fewer eggs and higher prices. There was a time perhaps when the boycott could have been used without having any particular effect upon the market, but now it becomes a dangerous instrument in the hands of those who do not understand the economic principles that underlie production, transportation and distribution.

Consumers have been urged to take their market baskets, go out and buy their food and carry it home. The market basket is a splendid thing which ought to be carried oftener than it is; women ought to be urged to go to market and select their food, but not without proper protection against food speculation and inefficient transportation and distribution. If the municipalities and the state do not make it possible for food to be brought into the city without waste and without rehandling, if there is no efficient system of distribution by which this food is carried directly to different parts of the city and distributed under regulations which cut out food speculation and combination in food prices, the market basket will have no effect at all in reducing the cost of living.

NOT A FREE AGENT

The housewife cannot always exercise her own judgment in regard to food for her family. There are limitations. In the first place, the individual taste of the family must be considered. We have not yet arrived at the condition of society when one can prescribe a certain kind of food for all individuals. In fact food that is not relished very often does not give the proper nourishment. Of course I do not mean to say that much cannot be done by the house-mother in directing and guiding the tastes of her family. Much can be done, but only to a certain degree. She is bound to consider what her family likes if she wishes to make her house a home and not merely a place where food that will support life is given out. We all know that beans have just about as much protein as meat, and yet if your family will not eat beans, what are you going to do? Or if your family refuses to eat beans oftener than once a week,

what solution of the problem can you offer? One cannot use force; the house-mother of today cannot go around with a bean pot in one hand and a club in the other.

Then in addition to that is the effect of food on the individual, which is something that must be considered as well as the taste. For instance, there are food idiosyncrasies, and these are more common than one would suppose. There are a number of individuals who cannot eat eggs without becoming bilious. Those who have rheumatic tendencies cannot eat tomatoes, grape fruit, lemons, strawberries and rhubarb. Milk does not agree with some individuals. Others are poisoned by fish.

The consumer also must have the coöperation of the family. Even where members of the family are *able* to eat everything, unless the family *will* eat everything, the consumer is much hampered in providing a well-balanced ration for her family at a reasonable cost. The head of the family himself often is the stumbling block. A man who earns three or four dollars a day at hard work naturally demands that his wife give him what he calls "good meals." Having earned his bread by the sweat of his brow he thinks he has a right to choose the kind of bread he wants to eat, and having the balance of power, the pocketbook, he makes his wishes rule the house. The professional and business man very often follows the same habit and demands that certain kinds of food be served, and so the housewife has to buy that which is demanded, and by thus buying, is not a free agent in selecting foods. She is obliged often to buy food at what she considers an exorbitant price which she would not touch if she were at liberty to do as she pleased. Very often men who complain of household bills will not agree to do without the things that make those prices exorbitant.

As a result, few women have had the vital interest in the food problem that they should have until the present situation in regard to food conservation has arisen. One of the blessings that may come from this great war evil is that a widespread interest in foods has been aroused. Up to this time few club women have been enthusiastic in regard to the subject. Those who have worked along these lines foreseeing the vision of the present situation, felt discouraged many times owing to the lack of interest among their sisters. Most clubs have had some program in regard to foods and home economics, as I have said, but very few clubs have taken up

the matter with the same enthusiasm as they have had in getting playgrounds, recreation centers, proper legislation, public health and sanitation, political equality and civic improvements. Music, literature and art have all taken precedence of this vital topic. A musicale, an art exhibition, or a social tea would draw crowds when a food demonstration would call out handfuls. Even at the outbreak of the war, the Red Cross, the Emergency Aid and the Army and Navy League were organized and doing effective work before the food problem had been touched. It is only with the entrance of the government into food conservation and the appeal to the women of America to do their patriotic duty that the foods have received anything near their proper attention from the majority of women.

A great deal needs to be done for the housewife if she is to fulfill her duty. It is time to see that she has the right kind of markets.

She also should have full opportunity for practical instruction in home economics. I do not forget the work that is being done along that line by the Department of Agriculture at Washington, as well as by the extension work in our state colleges. Through these agencies valuable literature has been sent out and useful cooking and canning demonstrations have been held. But they have been of more value in the country districts than in our great cities because they have not been developed along lines that will reach the women of the city. A definite and concerted action should be taken at once to get proper instruction which will make it possible for women everywhere to have the necessary information. This is most important because just now there is great danger that the American woman in her endeavor to save food for patriotic reasons will become hysterical in her efforts. Unless she knows which foods are growth promoting and energy giving, she will make food selections that will injure the health of her family. Clubs and associations of all kinds should take up a definite program for giving housewives an opportunity to know these things and their relation to the welfare of the family.

A simple practical course in homemaking should be taught in the grades of our public schools. Food values and food groupings should be concretely illustrated by having models of meals that embody them. Artificial groups of foods might be a part of the equipment of schools just as much as blackboards are. Practical

instruction in food selection and preparation ought to be carried through the grades so that by the time the girls finish the eighth grade they will know how to buy the right kind of food at the best possible price. They also will know how to cook the food and serve it appetizingly. They will be able to select foods on a calorie basis and be as familiar with proteins, carbohydrates and vitamins, as the housewife of today is with soda and baking powder.

The crux of the situation in regard to the cost of foods rests upon abundant production, proper transportation and efficient distribution. This year has proven what can be done in the way of increasing production, but so far the consumer has not reaped the full advantage of the abundant crops because the transportation and distribution of foods are still in an antiquated form. The consumer should be directly interested in improving these conditions because the prices of foods in the future will depend largely upon their proper distribution now. The producer must get a fair return for his labor and investment. The consumer should get food at reasonable prices without paying toll to five or six middlemen. Right here is the need for economic study of foods. It is the duty of each city and state to stop dilly-dallying and do something. Terminal markets should be established in connection with regional markets that food may be distributed quickly and effectively to every part of the city, eliminating the present glut at one part and scarcity at the other.

A word about curb markets. There is much talk of curb markets as a solution. The time has gone by when we can expect or demand the producer to be distributor and retailer on the street. The nearby truck farmer may find it profitable to come into the city and sell his produce on its streets, but the student of economic principles questions whether it would not be better for the farmer to specialize in farming and leave the retailing and distributing in other hands. Coöperative societies are already being formed among the farmers which promise success. The next logical step would be to organize coöperative societies in the city which would be distributing agencies for the coöperative societies in the country. There would be a reciprocal relation which would be highly advantageous to both.

The problem of getting enough food to feed the family is most serious in the eyes of housewives all over the United States. There

is consternation in the minds of housewives as they look forward to the winter months. Women have responded nobly to the call to help produce and conserve food. Our abundant harvests and stores of canned and dried foods prove that. Women are doing their part in food economy so that there may be no waste in garbage pails. But that has had no appreciable effect in lowering prices except for a few vegetables. The one thing that prevents utter discouragement is that the President of the United States has been enabled to appoint a food administrator with full power. It is to Mr. Hoover, as representative of the federal government, that the housewives are looking for relief. They turn to him for protection against food speculators by making it a crime that ranks with treason for any individual or corporation to hoard or manipulate foods so that they are sold at exorbitant prices. They look to Mr. Hoover to see that food prices are based upon actual cost of production and distribution, including all return to labor and capital, but with no excess wartime profit. They look to Mr. Hoover to make an example of such men as those who have dumped loaves of bread upon vacant lots and have set fire to the bread—bread which thousands of women are doing their best to save. The consumer also looks to each state and city to do its part in helping to solve the food problem.

The development of the United States Bureau of Markets is proving of great value from an educational and publicity viewpoint. Some states have also formed market bureaus which have given an opportunity to do good work. The trouble is that in too many cases these bureaus have no "teeth" to make their influence felt. The consumer needs a bureau of foods and markets with power in each city to which she can appeal. This bureau should be placed on the same footing as the bureau of public health, public safety and public utilities. There should be some local court of appeal to which the consumer can address his complaints when situations, like the one existing at present, arise. For instance women are clamoring to know why they have to pay 20 cents a quarter peck in West Philadelphia, or at the rate of \$3.20 a bushel, for tomatoes when the crop is so abundant that the government is calling upon women to volunteer for work in canning factories to save it.

As a consumer, and representing other women interested in the food problem, I am most earnestly asking for the assistance of all in heeding the appeal and standing with the housewife; in urging

upon cities the immediate need of establishing terminal markets connected with regional markets; in developing trolley freight, motor truck and parcel post deliveries so that nearby products may be brought in cheaply; in forming coöperative associations; in urging educational development in practical home economics in the grades of our public schools; in demanding that all city nurses and social workers be required to have training in home economics before they are ready to go to work, and in this way may help to eliminate some racial prejudices through health centers and social centers.

The food problem has become not only the problem of the consumer represented by the housewife but is the problem of men and women in all walks of life. Only by their coöperation can there be any stable solution.

FOOD CONSERVATION IN NEW YORK CITY

BY LUCIUS P. BROWN,

Director, Bureau of Food and Drugs, Department of Health, New York City.

In telling what has been done in the city of New York for conservation, it is necessary to tell you that the Food and Drugs Bureau of the Department of Health has a force of some ninety inspectors within the city. This force is divided into two broad divisions as far as the work is concerned. One of these divisions works with the retailer in maintaining a sanitary condition of the stores and the quality of the food sold by the grocer, restaurant people and delicatessen man and allied callings. The other division of the force looks after the food in a wholesale way and for this purpose is divided not along geographic but along functional lines.

One squad from the latter force meets the city's food as it enters the city and halts there all unsound material, forcing, when any consignment of food is found to contain both sound and unsound material, the separation of the sound from the unsound portions. It has been found by experience that one of the most effective ways of using food materials which are in part unsound or in which the unsoundness has not proceeded to its ultimate term of decay is to subject it to that form of camouflage which is so readily offered by